

★ SPECIAL 'ORIGIN OF THE CLAW' ISSUE! ★

REMEMBER!

DON'T BELIEVE  
**EVERYTHING**  
YOU CAN **SEE**

... AND  
DON'T **TRUST**  
THE THINGS  
YOU **CAN'T!**

# JACK STAFF

11  
OCT

BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!



£1.80  
\$2.95 US



Well it's all starting to get a little busy! I've now done about half of the all-new all-colour Jack Staff issue 1. I've just got to finish off this issue, write replies to various interviews, draw the cover for issue 2, finish off the issue 1 and then get on with issue 12. This all seemed a long way away back in April...



# FLAG WAVING

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Just to keep you updated, Jack Staff 1 will now be coming out from Image in February 2003. It got pushed back a month because Image were going to be re-launching their super-hero line in January and it all looked a little crowded! For those who might care about these sort of details I don't see Jack Staff as being part of the Image Universe so don't go expecting a Jack Staff - Spawn crossover anytime soon. Anyway, you should now be able to order Jack Staff 1 from the Image section of the latest Previews. There should also be a 5 page preview on the Image website, [www.imagecomics.com](http://www.imagecomics.com).

The previously mentioned Burglar Bill series will now be out in May 2003. This is a series I did about 12 years ago (I suddenly feel very old!), of which only the first issue was ever published. The first four and a half issues of this six issue series have been completed for a long time, so it shouldn't cause any scheduling problems for those who have expressed doubts about the wisdom of all this!

As far as personal appearances go in 2003, I'm not planning on going to San Diego this summer, but I'm thinking of going in 2004 - still, that's a long way away right now!

I will be in Bristol for the 2003 comic festival in May (I think - sorry don't have the full details right now, I'm sure there'll be a lot more said nearer the time). Actually I'll probably be in Bristol next week doing some Christmas shopping - but that's another story!

LOST ADRESSES - will M. Chivers from Exeter and S. J. Greenslade from Wales please let me know their full addresses! Thank you! As a general rule, please include a full address each time you write, even if you have written before, otherwise I do tend to lose track of things a bit!



# THIS MAN HAS BEEN **DRUGGED!**

HIS THOUGHTS ARE **CHAOTIC!**  
**RANDOM! JUMBLED!** EVEN  
THE MOST **SIMPLE ACTION**  
REQUIRES TREMENDOUS  
**CONCENTRATION AND**  
**DETERMINATION!**

# THIS MAN HAS BEEN **RESTRAINED!**

PLACED INSIDE THE TIGHT  
FITTING **STRAIGHTJACKET,**  
HIS ARMS ARE BOUND TIGHTLY  
BEHIND HIS BACK!

# THIS MAN HAS BEEN **LOCKED UP!**

HE HAS BEEN PLACED IN A  
SOLITARY ROOM, WITH NO  
WINDOWS! THE ONLY WAY IN  
OR **OUT** IS THROUGH THE  
LOCKED REINFORCED  
STEEL DOOR!

# BUT IS THIS MAN A **PRISONER?**

**NO! NEVER!** FOR THIS IS NO  
ORDINARY MAN. INDEED, HE  
IS PROBABLY THE MOST  
**EXTRAORDINARY** MAN IN ALL  
THE EMPIRE!

HE IS



# CHARLIE RAVEN

**THE GREATEST ESCAPOLOGIST OF THE VICTORIAN AGE!**

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# QUESTIONS!

THAT'S WHAT THE MAN KEPT  
ASKING HIM. **STUPID QUESTIONS!**

"WHAT IS THE YEAR?"

**1877**

"WHO IS THE QUEEN?"

**VICTORIA**

"WHO IS THE PRIME MINISTER?"

**DISRAELI**



OVER AND OVER THEY ASKED  
HIM QUESTIONS A **CHILD**  
COULD ANSWER! DID THEY  
THINK HIM SOME KIND OF  
**FOOL? A SIMPLETON?**

HE **IS CHARLIE RAVEN!**  
HE HAS DINED WITH **PRINCES**  
AND **PAUPERS** AND TREATED  
THEM BOTH THE **SAME!**

HE IS **NOBODYS FOOL!**

BUT **HOW** DID IT COME TO  
**THIS? HOW** DID HE GET **HERE?**

**THINK!**

ALL HE **REMEMBERS** FOR  
SO **LONG** IS THE **DARK,**  
THE **COLD** AND THEN WAKING  
UP IN A CASKET, AND FINDING  
HIMSELF **SURROUNDED**  
BY **STRANGERS!**

**SO** HOW DID HE GET IN  
THE CASKET?

HE REMEMBERS A **DRINK**. HE  
REMEMBERS **FALLING** ON THE  
FLOOR, UNABLE TO **MOVE**.

HE WAS PLACED INSIDE THE  
CASKET. HE REMEMBERS THE  
BOX BEING CARRIED A SHORT  
DISTANCE, THEN LOWERED.

HE REMEMBERS THE SOUND  
OF EARTH BEING DROPPED ON  
THE LID...

**NO!** HE WAS TO BE  
**BURIED ALIVE!**

BY USING THE **ANCIENT  
TECHNIQUES** HE HAD LEARNT  
IN HIS YOUTH, HE ENTERED A  
**MEDITATIVE TRANCE**  
SLOWING DOWN HIS **BREATHING**  
AND **HEARTBEAT**, THAT WOULD  
KEEP HIM ALIVE UNTIL A  
RESCUE COULD BE EFFECTED!

**WHO? WHY?**

THE **WOMAN! YES!** HE  
REMEMBERS **HER!** SHE WAS  
THE ONE WHO STOLE THE **LIFE  
FORCE** OF MEN, MAKING THEM  
OLD BEFORE THEIR **TIME!**

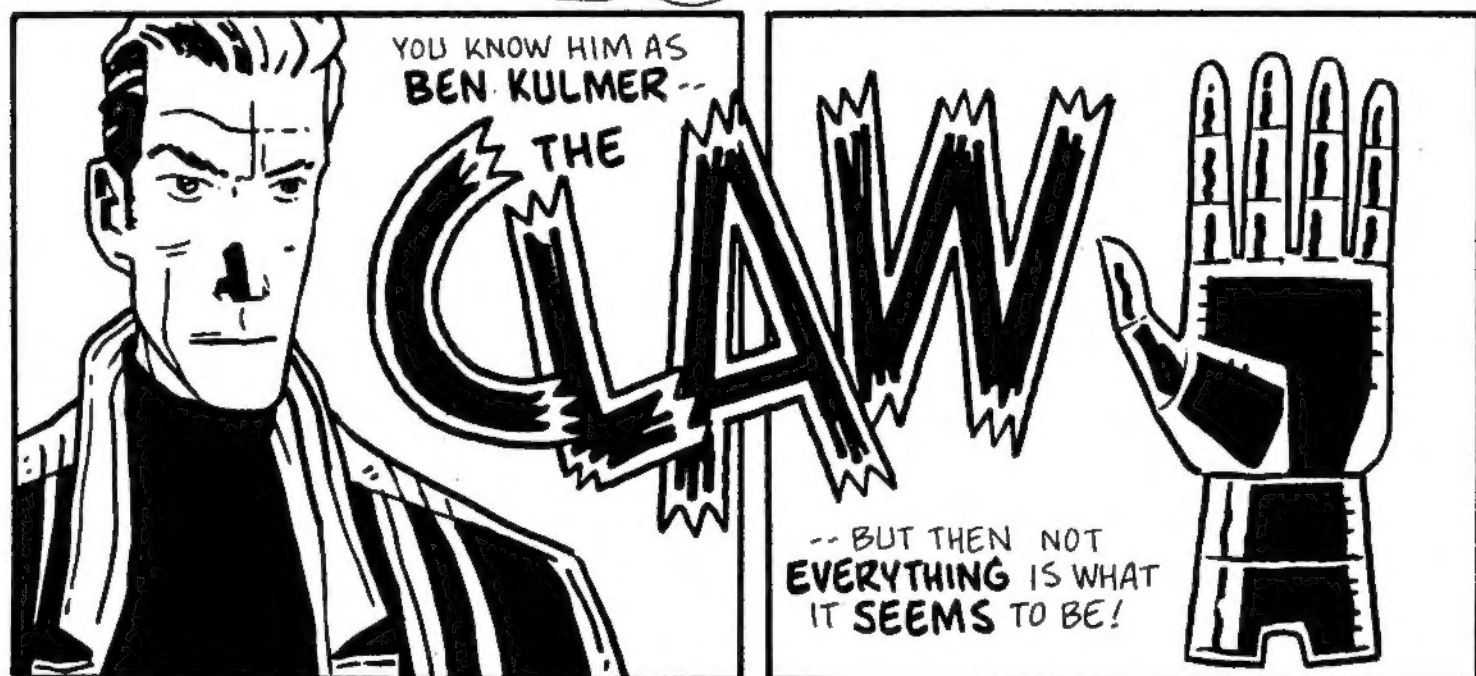
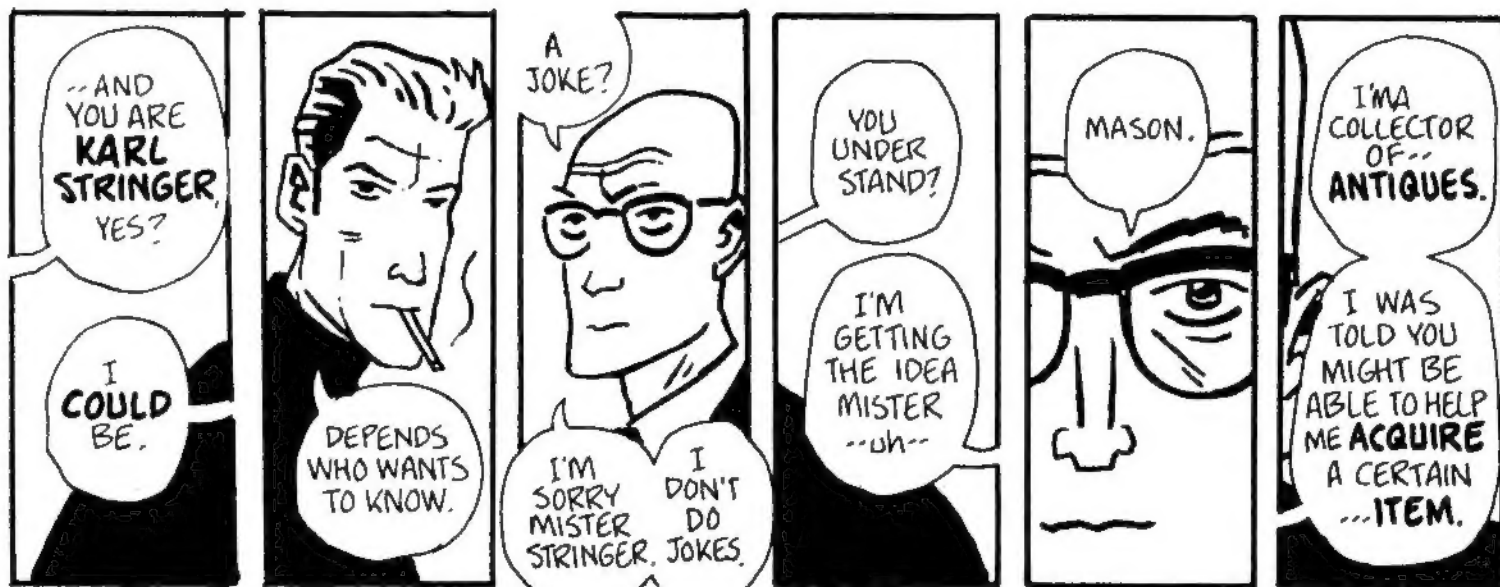
**YES!** IT WAS **HER!**

AND SHE MUST BE BEHIND ALL  
**THIS** TOO! IT'S ALL PART OF HER  
PLAN TO DISORIENTATE HIM -  
MAKE HIM INEFFECTIVE! USELESS!

BUT **HE IS CHARLIE RAVEN!**

HE IS **FREE** AND HE WILL  
STOP HER, IF ONLY THERE  
IS STILL **TIME!**

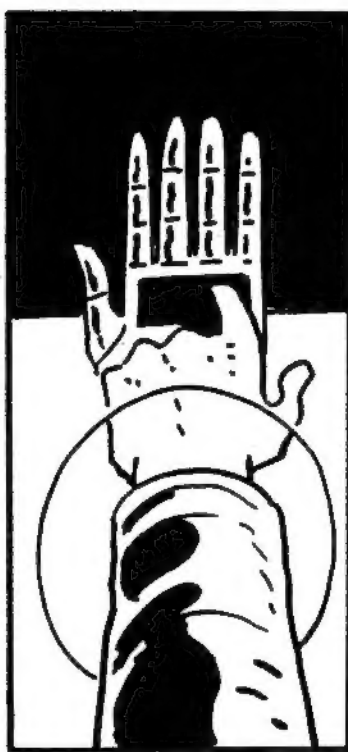






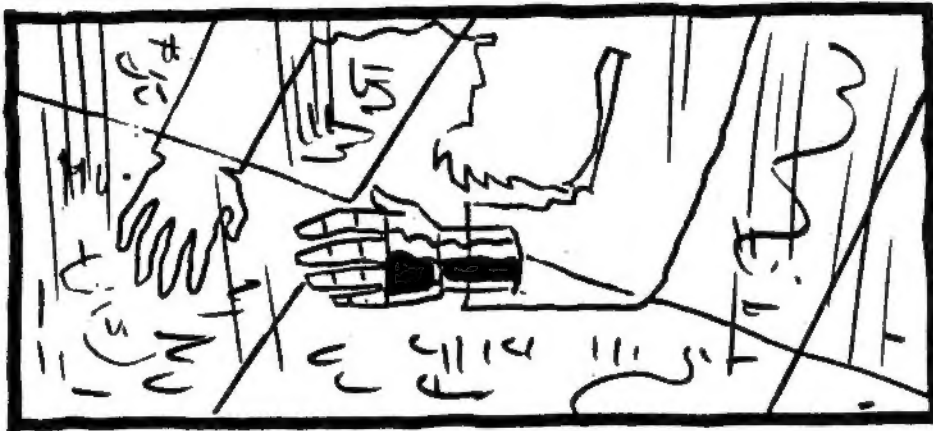
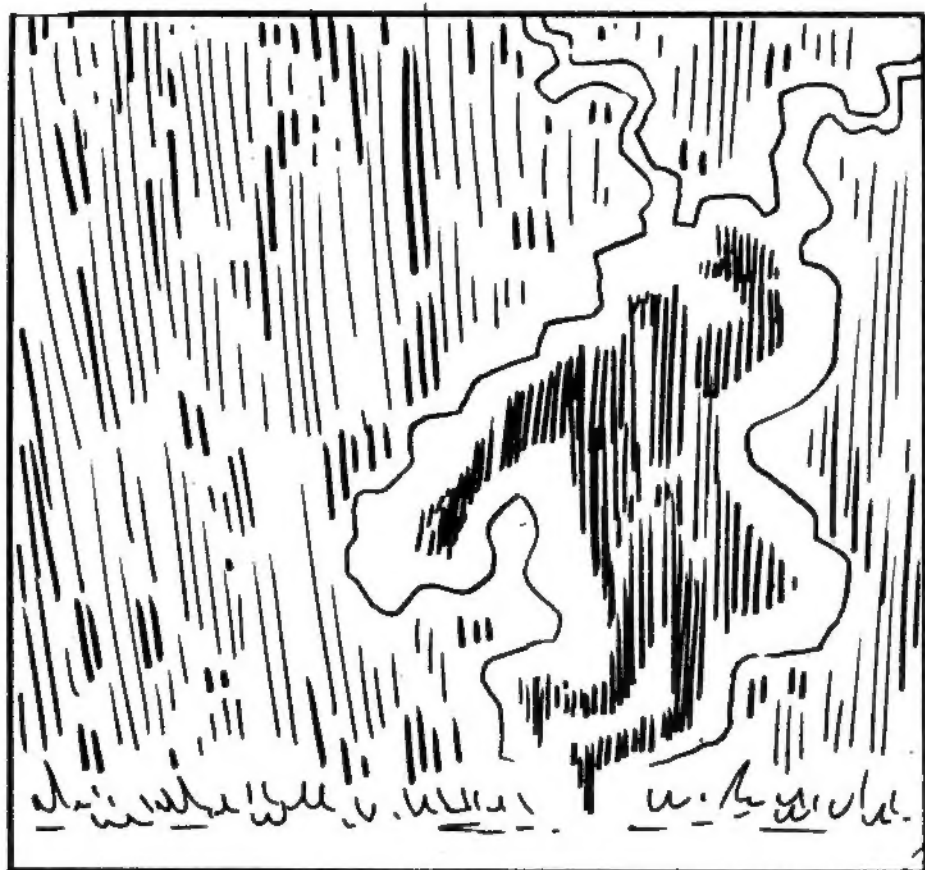


# KABOOM











The guy in the black T-shirt is JOHN SMITH. He's a builder. A couple of weeks ago he dug a box out of this hole.

When they opened the box last night we found a man inside claiming to be a VICTORIAN ESCAPE ARTIST.

I know it sounds crazy but then so does the idea that BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO is really a builder called JOHN SMITH.

I'VE CHECKED HIM OUT. THERE REALLY WAS A CHARLIE RAVEN.

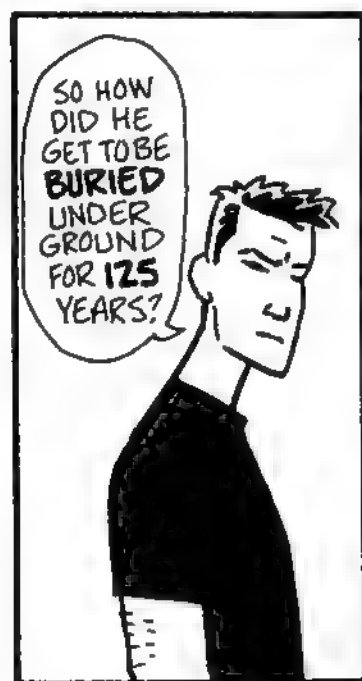
AND HE WAS A VICTORIAN ESCAPE ARTIST.

I'm **BECKY BURDOCK**  
VAMPIRE REPORTER



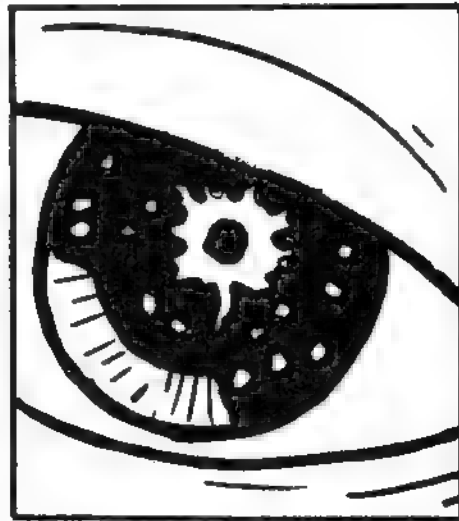
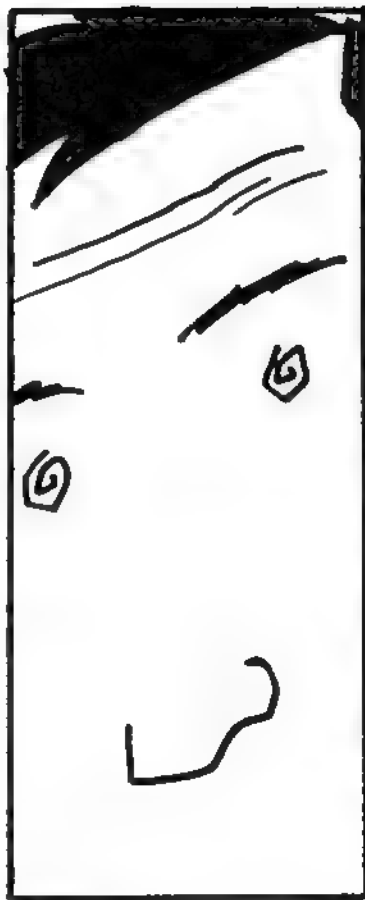
HE TOURED THE COUNTRY -- EVEN PLAYED HERE IN CASTLETOWN IN 1877.

HE BILLED HIMSELF AS THE GREATEST ESCAPOLOGIST OF THE VICTORIAN AGE.







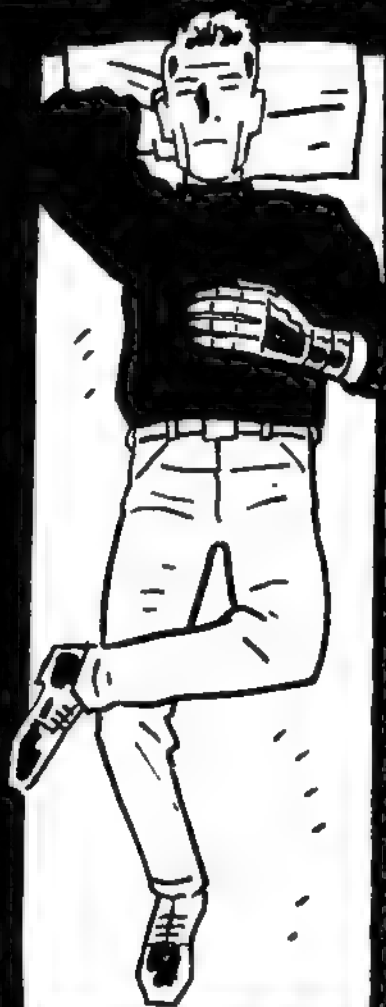
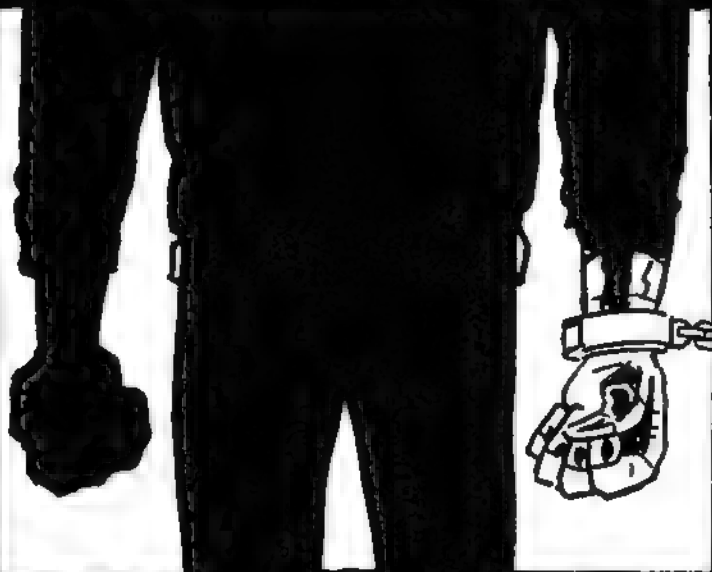


KARL  
STRINGER?

I'M ARRESTING  
YOU FOR  
BURGLARY.

YOU DO  
NOT HAVE  
TO SAY  
ANYTHING,  
BUT ANYTHING  
YOU **DO** SAY  
CAN AND  
MAY BE  
USED **AGAINST**  
YOU IN A  
COURT OF  
LAW.

IT MAY  
HARM YOUR  
DEFENCE  
IF YOU DO  
NOT MENTION  
NOW  
SOMETHING  
WHICH YOU  
LATER RELY  
ON IN  
COURT.



DO I CALL  
YOU **KARL  
STRINGER**

...  
OR DO YOU  
PREFER THE  
NEWSPAPER  
NICK-NAME?

THE  
**CLAW**



WELL  
NOW.

THAT  
DEPENDS  
ON WHO'S  
DOING THE  
CALLING.





A black and white comic panel showing a woman with curly hair, wearing a light-colored jacket over a dark top. She has a serious expression.

HELEN  
MORGAN.

A black and white comic panel showing Helen Morgan from the previous panel on the right, looking towards a man on the left. The man is wearing a dark suit and is gesturing with his hand.

I'M SORRY  
BUT YOU'RE  
**WASTING**  
YOUR TIME  
MISS.

IN CASE  
YOU HAVEN'T  
HEARD I'M  
NOT TALKING  
TO THE  
POLICE.

THAT'S  
OKAY.

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of Helen Morgan's face. She has a slightly annoyed or determined expression.

I'M NOT  
**EXACTLY**  
POLICE

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of Helen Morgan's face. She is looking slightly to the side with a serious expression.

I  
REPRESENT

**Q.**

WE INVESTIGATE  
CRIMES OF A  
**PARTICULAR**  
NATURE.

THE  
BIZARRE-  
THE UNEX-  
PLAINABLE.

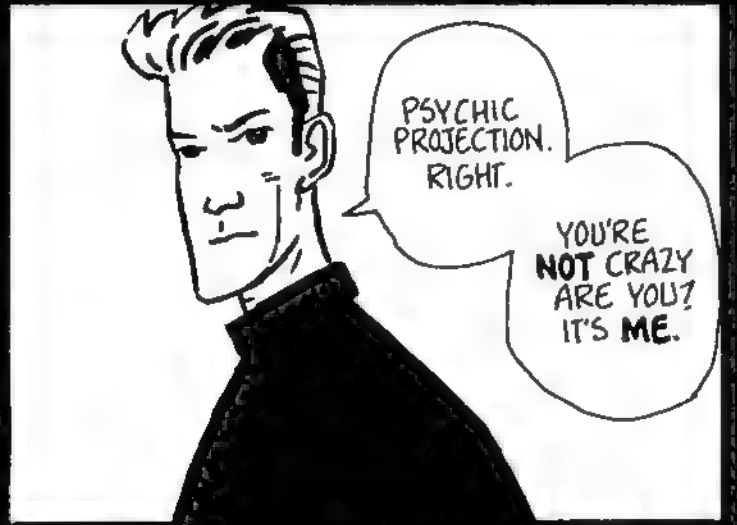
QUESTION  
MARK  
CRIMES.

**GUARD!**  
**GUARD!**

A black and white comic panel showing Helen Morgan on the left, seen from the back/side. She is looking towards two men on the right. The man in the middle is wearing a dark suit and is gesturing with his hand. The man on the right is also wearing a dark suit and is gesturing with his hand.

WHAT'S  
ALL THE  
**SHOUTING**  
ABOUT  
STRINGER?

YOU  
CAN TELL  
THE **CRAZY**  
LADY HER  
TIME'S  
UP.







I'M WHAT THEY CALL AN  
OLD FASHIONED COPPER.

THE KIND OF COPPER  
WHO KNOWS HOW TO  
GET RESULTS.

THE WAY I SEE IT, IF A  
COPPER HAS TO BEND THE  
RULES TO GET A RESULT,  
SOMETHING'S WRONG.

WHOOOP  WHOOOP



DETECTIVE INSPECTOR

**MAVERYK**

featuring DET. SGT. "ZIPPER" NOLAN



AND IT ISN'T THE COPPER.

**DALE**  
**NURSING**  
**HOME**



RIGHT,  
THIS IS  
SUPPOSED  
TO BE A  
**CRIME**  
**SCENE.**

LET'S  
TREAT  
IT LIKE  
ONE.

C'MON-  
SOME  
ONE'S  
DEAD.

LET'S  
LOOK  
LIVELY.

SIR  
I  
...

MY  
**CASE**  
NOLAN.

MY  
**RULES.**





THIS?

THIS IS YOUR  
**SUSPICIOUS  
DEATH?**

YOU  
DRAGGED  
ME HALF  
WAY CROSS  
TOWN FOR  
**THIS?**



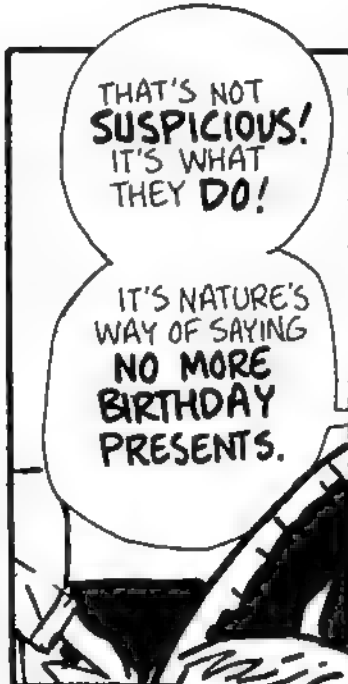
TAKE A  
LOOK  
AROUND  
NOLAN.

THIS  
IS AN  
**OLD  
PEOPLE'S  
HOME.**



THIS  
PLACE  
IS FULL  
OF **OLD  
PEOPLE.**

**OLD  
PEOPLE  
DIE.**



THAT'S NOT  
**SUSPICIOUS!**  
IT'S WHAT  
THEY **DO!**

IT'S NATURE'S  
WAY OF SAYING  
**NO MORE  
BIRTHDAY  
PRESENTS.**



I'M WHAT THEY  
CALL AN **OLD  
FASHIONED  
COPPER.**

SHE  
DIDN'T  
DIE OF  
**OLD AGE  
SIR.**

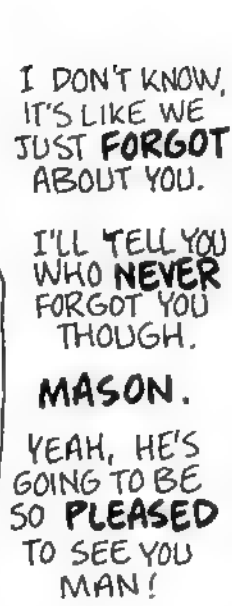


HER  
NAME WAS  
**HANNAH  
NOONE.**

SHE  
**WORKED**  
AT THE  
HOME.

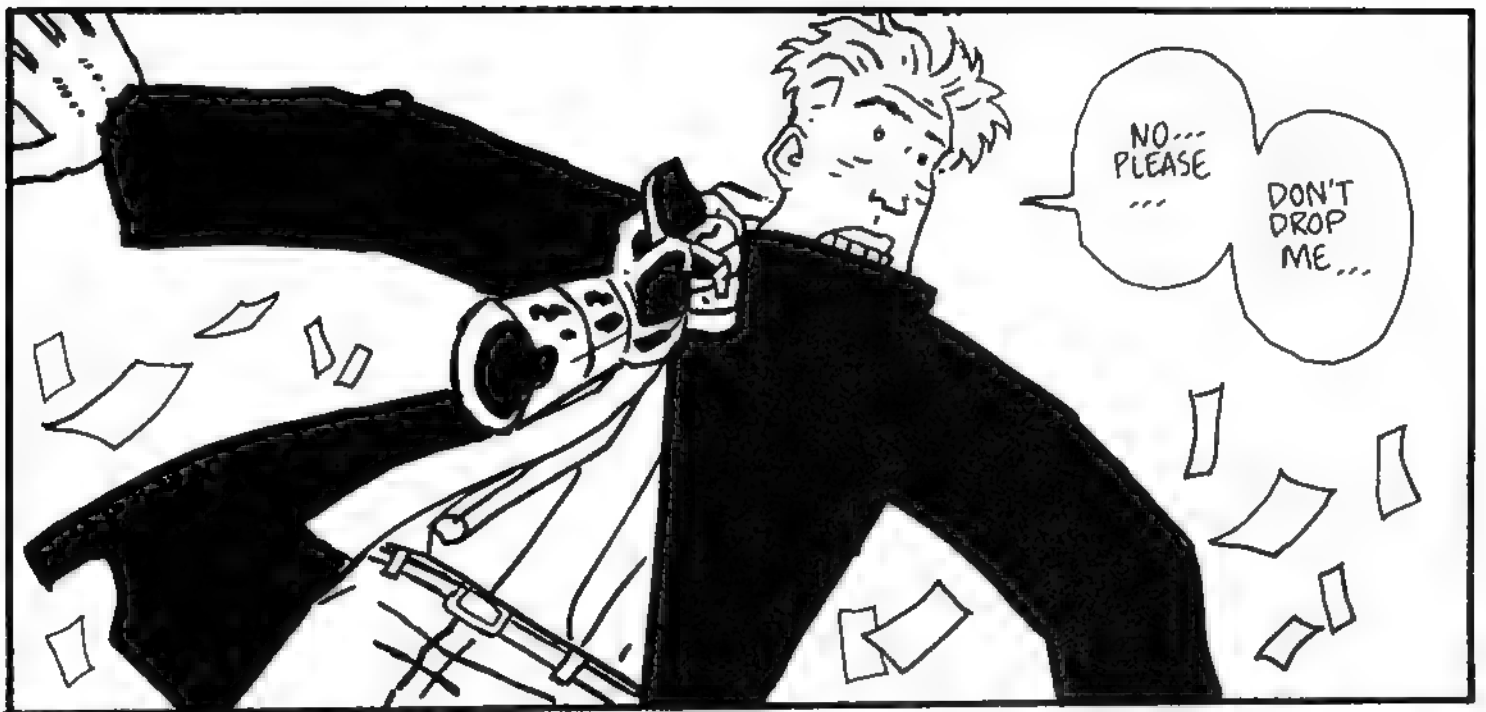
SHE  
WAS ONLY  
**TWENTY  
TWO.**

SO HOW COME  
WE DON'T GET  
**OLD FASHIONED  
CRIMES ANYMORE?**











NO, SERIOUSLY  
LOOK, ALL  
THAT STUFF  
I SAID  
BEFORE...



I WAS  
NEVER  
GOING  
TO TELL  
MASON.

YOU  
DO KNOW  
THAT  
DON'T  
YOU?

I  
KNOW.



SO  
UH  
..

YOU  
MAKE ANY  
-THING ELSE  
DISAPPEAR?



LET ME  
PUT IT  
**THIS**  
WAY...



I DON'T  
THINK  
I'LL SEE  
**YOU**  
AGAIN.

FRIGHTEN HIM.

THAT WAS ALL HE  
WAS GOING TO DO.

SO WHY DID HE DO THAT?

BEN KULMER  
IS FALLING.

HE HASN'T HIT THE  
GROUND YET.

SOMEWHERE IN THE  
SHADOWS, SOMETHING  
**RED** IS LAUGHING.

**HOW LONG** HE HAS BEEN HELD AGAINST HIS WILL IN THIS FETID HOLE, **CHARLIE RAVEN** HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING! THE **ONLY** THOUGHT THAT FILLS HIS MIND IS **ESCAPE!** NOTHING MUST STAND IN HIS WAY!



**VOICES!** SOMEONE IS COMING UP THE STAIRS! ALREADY THEY THEY LOOKING FOR HIM! BUT THEY WILL **NOT** CATCH HIM **AGAIN!** THE ONLY WAY OUT IS THE BARRED WINDOW WHICH HANGS JUST BEYOND REACH! BUT THE MASTER ESCAPOLOGIST IS READY FOR **ANY** EVENTUALITY! A SHARP STAMP ON THE FLOOR RELEASES THE **SPRINGHEELS** IN HIS BOOTS, LIFTING HIM HIGH ABOVE HIS PURSUERS!





HE **TWISTS!** HE **TURNS!** HE **CONTORTS** HIS RUBBER  
**BONED BODY** THROUGH THE NARROW WINDOW BARS! STANDING ON THE  
LEDGE OF THE BUILDING THERE REMAINS ONLY **ONE WAY OF ESCAPE!**  
PAYING NO HEED TO THE **DANGER**, CHARLIE RAVEN LEAPS AND TRUSTS THE TREES  
WILL BREAK HIS FALL! FAR BETTER TO DIE **CHASING THE ADVENTURE** THAN  
LIVE A DULL MONOCHROME LIFE!



**RUN** CHARLIE RAVEN, **RUN!**

IGNORE THE PAIN IN YOUR SIDE--  
THE **SWELLING** OF YOUR **ANKLE!**  
THE AUTHORITIES MUST BE INFORMED!

THE **WARNING BELL** MUST BE RUNG!



YOU ARE **THE HOPE** of the **EMPIRE!**

HE HAS BEEN CHAINED INSIDE A CAGE WITH A **SIBERIAN TIGER**. HE WAS SUSPENDED OVER THE RIVER THAMES BY A **BURNING ROPE**. THERE IS NO **LOCK** HE CANNOT **UNPICK**. NO **KNOT** HE CANNOT **LOOSE**. NO **TRAP** HE CANNOT **ESCAPE**. AFTER ALL, HE IS



# CHARLIE RAVEN

THE GREATEST ESCAPOLOGIST OF THE VICTORIAN AGE!



BUT NOW HIS WORLD HAS GONE MAD! THERE IS NO ESCAPE! NO WAY OUT!  
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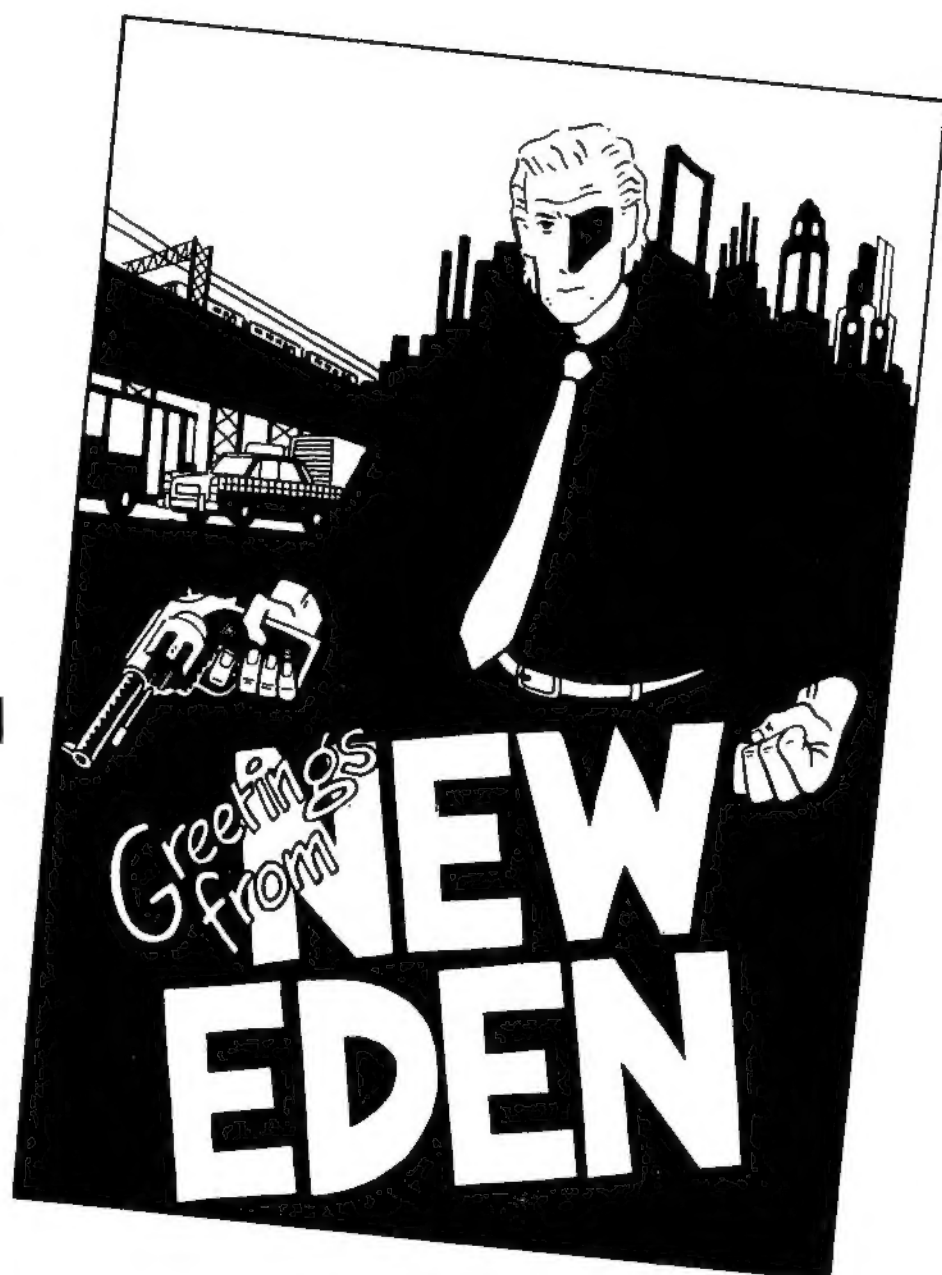
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